

□ 1030

## PROGRESS IN IRAQ

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, yesterday when Democrat leader Howard Dean said that the war in Iraq is unwinnable and Senate Democrat presidential candidate JOHN KERRY said that American soldiers in the dark of the night are terrorizing Iraqi women and children, I scratch my head in absolute disgust and disappointment. The party of Scoop Jackson has apparently been now completely hijacked by Cindy Sheehan and Michael Moore.

I went to Iraq last week, and I wish that Mr. Dean and Mr. KERRY would go to Iraq and talk directly to our soldiers. Here is what I found, and incidentally, I went with a bipartisan group, three Democrats, three Republicans. We found troop morale high, a great deal of enthusiasm for the mission. No equipment shortages. From tissue to toilet paper, our troops are well equipped. We found that they were very engaged in the mission and that the Iraqi security forces each day were getting more and more of the territory under their control.

We found enthusiasm for the December 15 election, 228 different political parties already offering candidates. A lot of progress is being made. Everything is completely different than the pessimism and the continuous criticism and the Vietnam-era radicalism expressed by Mr. KERRY and Mr. Dean. I would invite those two to go over there and see for themselves before they send such discouraging signals to our troops in action.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4340, UNITED STATES-BAHRAIN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 583 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

##### H. RES. 583

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4340) to implement the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement. The bill shall be considered as read. The bill shall be debatable for two hours equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means. Pursuant to section 151 of the Trade Act of 1974, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion.

SEC. 2. During consideration of H.R. 4340 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker in consonance with section 151 of the Trade Act of 1974.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 583 is a closed rule providing for 2 hours of debate in the House, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill. It also provides that pursuant to section 151(f)(2) of the Trade Act of 1974, the previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion.

Lastly, section 2 of the resolution provides that during consideration of the bill, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to a time designated by the Speaker in consonance with section 151 of the Trade Act of 1974.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 583 provides for the consideration of H.R. 4340, a bill to implement the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement, in accordance with trade measures negotiated under the Trade Promotion Authority.

Former United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick signed the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement on September 14, 2004. Under the agreement, all bilateral trade and consumer and industrial goods will be duty free, and 98 percent of U.S. agricultural exports will be duty free. Tariffs on the remaining products, such as alcohol and tobacco, will be reduced to zero within 10 years.

It is important to highlight that labor obligations are included at the core of this agreement, and they meet objectives set out by Congress. In addition, Bahrain has introduced labor reform laws to make its laws fully consistent with the International Labor Organization.

The United States must recognize the fact that 96 percent of the world's population resides outside of our country. That 96 percent represents a marketplace for U.S. goods and services that we cannot reach without proper trade agreements.

My home State of Washington is one of the most trade-dependent States in the Nation, and our economy depends on free and fair trade. From high-tech to agriculture, and from manufacturing industries to other businesses, Washington State and our Nation is in

a position to benefit from having more trading partners.

Mr. Speaker, the United States-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act would be the fourth trade agreement reached between the United States and a Middle Eastern country and is an integral part in creating a Middle East free trade area.

This agreement is important in bringing stability to the Middle East region and sending a strong signal to countries in that region about the benefits of closer economic and political ties with the United States. Approving this agreement is another step in the right direction toward integrating fair trade policies and economic reforms with our national security interest in supporting a more stable and prosperous Middle East.

Both House Resolution 583 and H.R. 4340 were reported by their respective committees by a voice vote. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 583 and the underlying bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Washington State (Mr. HASTINGS) for the time, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Sometimes these rules cause confusion when there are two Mr. HASTINGS managing the rule. So in advance, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that my good friend and I want to make sure that there is no confusion.

Mr. Speaker, my good friend and colleague has already pointed out the closed rule we are working on today is mandated by the fact that we are dealing with a trade agreement. So I take no issue with the type of rule, on this specific occasion.

However, as I said to Chairman DREIER last night, along with closed rules, trade agreements by our rules are supposed to come to the House floor with 20 hours of debate. I do recognize the limiting aspect with reference to the rule, and this trade agreement is permitted 2 hours.

Chairman DREIER pointed out, rightly I believe, that this U.S.-Bahrain trade agreement is one of the most noncontroversial agreements of this kind to come before Congress in a long time, and as I said, that may be so, but it is also not the point that I wish to carry.

We have had several more controversial trade deals come before the House in recent years where we were also given 2 hours of debate time. More recently, we saw that in two trade agreements. Trade deals should come to the floor under the 20 hours of debate that the law prescribes. If only 5 hours or 5 minutes is what is necessary to pass the bill, so be it, but I see a bad precedent being set. I ask my friends in the majority to let the House work its will, not so much on this bill, but certainly any other in the future that comes before us.